



INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR
TRADE AND SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT

Bridges

Weekly Trade News Digest

18 May 2005

Volume 9 Number 17

LEAD STORIES

PASCAL LAMY SET TO BECOME NEXT WTO DIRECTOR-GENERAL	1
S&DT TALKS FORGE AHEAD WITH LDC PROPOSALS	2
US TO IMPOSE TEXTILES SAFEGUARDS ON CHINA3	

IN BRIEF

SUPACHAI CONFIRMED AS UNCTAD SECRETARY- GENERAL	5
TRADE QUESTIONS KEY TO DEVELOPING COUNTRY BIOSAFETY POLICY, UNCTAD SAYS	5
SUSTAINABLE ENERGY FORUM CONSIDERS BIOFUELS TRADE	6

WTO IN BRIEF

NEW US APPROACH TO INJECT MOMENTUM INTO SERVICES TALKS?	6
--	---

EVENTS & RESOURCES

VACANCY	7
EVENTS	7
RESOURCES	8

BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest is [also available online](http://www.ictsd.org/subscribe) and is updated every week. To subscribe to BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest, please visit the ICTSD website at <http://www.ictsd.org/subscribe>

If you require any assistance setting up your BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest subscription, please contact Trineesh Biswas, Editor, by email at: tbiswas@ictsd.ch, or by telephone at: (41-22) 917-8498

LEAD STORIES

PASCAL LAMY SET TO BECOME NEXT WTO DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Former EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy is set to succeed Supachai Panitchpakdi as Director-General of the WTO. His last remaining rival for the job, former Uruguayan WTO Ambassador Carlos Perez del Castillo, conceded defeat on 13 May. Barring any unforeseen problems, the 26-27 May meeting of the WTO General Council will formally confirm his appointment; he is set to start a four-year term on 1 September.

Lamy emerges as most likely consensus candidate

WTO General Council Chair Amina Chawahir Mohamed, who has been leading the consultative process to choose Supachai's successor, told WTO Member delegations on 13 May that the third and last round of "confessionals" indicated that the Frenchman was more likely to attract Members' consensus support. She said that she would formally recommend that the General Council accept Lamy's candidacy at its upcoming meeting.

Lamy was the favourite of almost four-fifths of the WTO's 148 Member delegations, attracting support from not only the EU's 25 constituent Members, but also from many African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) country Members, several of which receive trade preferences from the EU. The latter group had initially backed the candidacy of Mauritian Foreign Affairs and Trade Minister Jaya Krishna Cuttaree, who withdrew from the DG race in April (see BRIDGES Weekly, 4 May 2005, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/05-05-04/story3.htm>). Some prominent developing country Members including India, South Africa, and Thailand also chose Lamy over the representative from their G-20 counterpart, Uruguay.

The man who famously described the WTO's functioning as 'medieval' in the wake of the collapse of negotiations of the Cancun Ministerial Conference in 2003 thus now stands poised to take the helm of the organisation. Lamy's most pressing task will be to facilitate an agreement at the December WTO

Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong, and to shepherd the Doha Round of trade talks to a successful close.

During his tenure as EU Trade Commissioner from 1999 to 2004, Lamy attracted the ire of several developing countries due to his support for bringing the controversial 'Singapore issues' -- particularly investment, competition and government procurement -- into the WTO. Others complained about his sympathy towards including labour and environmental criteria in WTO talks. Some also begrudged him for what they saw as his defence of EU farm subsidies and protectionism. On the other hand, Lamy also attracted the criticism of some rich countries for his past proposal that least-developed countries be given a 'round for free' -- i.e., that they should not be asked to make any additional commitments as part of the Doha Round.

Lamy, for his part, maintained throughout his candidacy that his past arguments were made in his role as the EU's senior trade negotiator, and that they would not compromise his impartiality as head of the WTO. "The question is whether you can distance yourself from your previous constituency," he told the press in a February interview. "I think I match the bill."

Members grateful for smooth selection process; a handful dissent

Delegates by and large reported relief and satisfaction that the selection process had not been a repeat of the rancorous 1999 leadership contest. The previous race proved extraordinarily divisive and paralysed the WTO for months, distracting Members from preparatory work for the Seattle Ministerial Conference later that year, which went on to end in failure. Some trade diplomats who had supported other losing candidates suggested that the result was one they could work with, and that the lack of division surrounding his appointment already represented a positive start.

Uruguay's current WTO Ambassador Guillermo Valles Galmes made what was described as a gracious statement after the meeting, admitting to "mixed feelings" but stressing the importance of rallying behind a single candidate.

Costa Rica was the only country to express qualms at the 13 May meeting. The head of the country's delegation said that some Members had reservations about Lamy's candidacy, and that these dissenting views had not been reflected in Mohamed's statement. Sources report that these countries are primarily Latin American banana producers that had opposed Lamy's efforts to replace the EU's banana import quotas with what they saw as an overly high specific 'per tonne' tariff. Nonetheless, facing pressure from other Members

to join the consensus, Costa Rica said that it would not veto his appointment.

ICTSD reporting; "Lamy's last rival for WTO post withdraws," FINANCIAL TIMES, 14/15 May 2005; "WTO nominates Frenchman as leader," INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, 14 May 2005; "Can Pascal Lamy deliver?," DECCAN HERALD, 16 May 2005; "WTO Members Unite Behind Lamy for D-G; Uruguayan Withdraws From Leadership Race," WTO REPORTER, 16 May 2005; "Lamy cautious on EU agricultural subsidies," BANGKOK POST, 16 May 2005.

S&DT TALKS FORGE AHEAD WITH LDC PROPOSALS

Negotiations on special and differential treatment (S&DT) at the WTO moved ahead at meetings on 10 and 12 May, in which Members agreed to examine agreement-specific proposals that have been put forward by least developed countries (LDCs). At the two-day meeting of the Committee on Trade and Development Special (negotiating) Session (CTD-SS), Members put aside -- for the time being -- the Chair's previous approach and instead moved forward by examining five proposals that the LDCs have put forward for enhanced S&DT.

CTD-SS Chair Faizel Ismail made a proposal earlier this year to group both agreement-specific proposals, promoted by developing countries, and cross-cutting issues into two broad categories -- flexibility and capacity-building, to be taken up in negotiations (see BRIDGES Weekly, 9 February 2005, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/05-02-09/story2.htm>). The last CTD-SS meeting was adjourned early, however, after disagreement over the agenda, which some developing countries argued gave undue emphasis to cross-cutting issues (see BRIDGES Weekly, 13 April 2005, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/05-04-13/story3.htm>).

Instead, after extensive consultations, Members decided to move forward by looking at the agreement-specific special and differential treatment proposals that have been put forward by LDCs, with the understanding that WTO Members can discuss and consider cross-cutting proposals as solutions to the LDC agreement-specific proposals. Some Members suggested that this would "break an artificial barrier" in discussions allowing Members to look in detail at the agreement-specific proposals, most of which were drafted over four years ago and haven't been examined in more than two years, and consider what they aim to address.

Delegates examined five LDC proposals at the meeting, namely proposal 22/23 (Understanding in Respect of

Waivers of Obligations), 38 (Enabling Clause), 84 (Agreement on Trade-Related Investment Measures (TRIMS), 88 (Measure in Favour of LDCs) and 36 (Enabling Clause para. 3b).

In its most recent text, proposal 22/23 calls for "special consideration" of requests from developing and LDC Members for waivers of WTO obligations. In the discussion on the proposal, Australia, Canada, and the US wanted to hear more about the problems facing developing countries when requesting a waiver. In addition, the EU, Canada and Norway said they could only agree to a provision that would apply solely to LDCs. A number of other countries, including India, Colombia, Costa Rica, Brazil, Japan, Malaysia and Pakistan supported current language, and Paraguay suggested different wording providing for "adequate safeguarding" of "all developing country Members" while granting waiver requests.

Proposal 38 calls for the revision of the Enabling Clause (Decision on Differential and More Favourable Treatment, Reciprocity and Full Participation of Developing Countries) to ensure that the "extent and pace of liberalisation shall be determined in consultation with the government" of LDCs, taking into account that LDCs should not be required to take liberalisation measures that are inconsistent with their development, trade and financial needs. According to the proposal, the Enabling Clause should also be revised to provide flexibility regarding determinations of the base year from which liberalisation commitments are made to give credit to earlier liberalisation measures taken by developing countries and LDCs. The most controversial part (c) of the proposal, suggests that LDCs shall be allowed, if warranted by their economic and trade situations and stage of development, to make no reductions of tariffs in the agricultural and/or industrial sectors; exclude sub-sectors within these sectors from tariff reductions; and bind the rates reduced in the negotiations and the prevailing applied rates at levels consistent with their needs.

Switzerland, Australia and the EU said that situation had changed since the proposal was written and that this issue was being addressed in current negotiations. In particular, the need to provide flexibility and less than full reciprocity was addressed in the July Package's text on non agricultural market access (NAMA) and agriculture, including in provisions on less than full reciprocity in the former and special products/special safeguard mechanism (SP/SSM) in the latter. LDCs and the Africa Group said, however, that they would like to see such provisions considered not only in the current round of negotiations but on a longer-term basis, as they sought for a permanent solution to be incorporated into the structure of the WTO and not one

for this round of negotiations only. However, a number of developed countries, including the US, said that LDCs could not expect to make no commitments or receive a blanket perpetual exemption, as the objective of WTO Membership was to integrate LDCs into the multilateral trading system at some point and enable them to use it to full advantage. Some LDCs suggested that the intent of the proposal was to address the costs of implementation of WTO disciplines, not to ask for a blanket exemption. India and Brazil, along with several other countries, suggested that the LDCs redraft the proposal.

The remaining proposals ask for an exemption for LDCs from TRIMS (proposal 84), for LDCs to not be required to make commitments prejudicial to their development needs or capacity (proposal 88), and for the mitigation of negative impacts of erosion of preferences for LDCs (proposal 36, which was not discussed).

According to trade sources, the level of ambition and pace of discussions in the CTD-SS is being affected by overall progress in the Doha round and the slow pace of agriculture negotiations in particular. The discussions on the LDC proposals specifically revealed that some were outdated, or did not address the concerns and needs of the countries that proposed them. As such, LDCs met informally with other Members after the session to discuss how the proposals could be redrafted to better address their needs, a process they will continue in small groups with the assistance of the Chair. Redrafting will occur with support from the WTO Secretariat. Whether the next meeting will look at the same five proposals, as some Members hope, move on to other proposals, or come back to the Chair's original approach, will be determined in coming weeks.

ICTSD reporting.

US TO IMPOSE TEXTILES SAFEGUARDS ON CHINA

The US has decided to impose quotas on three categories of textiles and clothing imports from China. The 13 May announcement came after investigations showed that the imports were causing market disruption.

The surprisingly quick decision to restrict imports came only four days after the 9 May expiry of the public comment period for the investigations into market disruption launched at the beginning of April by the US Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements (CITA), an interagency US government group chaired by the Department of Commerce (see

BRIDGES Weekly, 6 April 2005,
<http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/05-04-06/story1.htm>).

China's terms of accession to the WTO include a 'textile specific safeguard clause' that allow WTO Members to impose quantitative restrictions on imports of Chinese textiles and clothing products if they are found to disrupt markets. Under the safeguard, Members can limit specific products to an increase of 7.5 percent above the preceding year's import levels.

In related news, on 17 May EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson asked the European Commission to accelerate the pre-safeguard procedure for t-shirts and flax yarn from China. In addition, a WTO Council for Trade in Goods meeting was adjourned on 10 May after WTO Members were unable to agree on whether to discuss a Tunisian proposal on the adjustment needs of developing countries in the wake of the end-2004 phase-out of trade quotas textiles and clothing sector.

US 'committed to level playing field'

CITA announced on 13 May that it had found evidence of market disruption, as well as the threat of further disruption, in its investigations of cotton knit shirts and blouses, cotton trousers, and cotton and man-made fibre underwear. It claimed that imports from China increased in volume by 1,276 percent, 1,573.2 percent, and 318.24 percent for the first, second, and third categories respectively.

The investigations were launched on 4 April, partially in response to US textiles manufacturers' demands for government intervention to protect domestic production. In its finding on 13 May, CITA confirmed both the validity of its self-initiated claim and of the claim lodged by the textiles manufacturers earlier in the year (identifying the "threat" of market disruption for the same products). This essentially validated the controversial claims by US textiles manufacturers that asked for the imposition of safeguards based solely on the "threat" of market disruption (see BRIDGES Weekly, 26 January 2005, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/05-01-26/story4.htm>).

As per the terms of the 'textile specific safeguard clause,' the US will limit Chinese imports of the three kinds of textiles to 7.5 percent above the preceding year's import levels. The restrictions will come into force as soon as CITA formally requests consultations with China on easing or avoiding market disruption. CITA said it would seek the consultations -- thus triggering the imposition of quotas -- by the end of May. Once triggered, the safeguards will stay in place until the two sides reach an agreement on an alternative way to dampen imports, or until the end of 2005.

Beijing reacted angrily to the measures, expressing its "strong displeasure and firm opposition" to CITA's decision, arguing that it was based upon "short-term and inaccurate statistics." In a note presented to the US Embassy in China, the Chinese government said that the reintroduction of quotas "runs counter to the basic spirit of free trade encouraged by the WTO" and "fails to conform to relevant regulations concerning China's accession to the WTO." Similarly, Chinese Commerce Ministry spokesperson Chong Quan added in a statement that "the Chinese government reserves the right to take further measures within the WTO framework," though he did not specify what such measures might entail.

According to US government data on textile and apparel imports for the first quarter of 2005, China's total textile and apparel shipments to the US jumped by 47.95 percent in the first three months of this year.

Developing countries affected

At a 10 May WTO Council for Trade in Goods (CTG) meeting, WTO Members considered a proposal from Tunisia (JOB(05)/31), supported by Turkey and Jordan, calling for remedies to the problems faced by developing countries in adjusting to the post-quota textile and clothing trading environment. The proposal asked WTO Members to examine ways to stabilise market prices for foods, textiles, and clothing and to work with international financial institutions on establishing a funding mechanism to help developing and least developing countries that have benefited from preferential quota access adjust to the new reality. In particular, it proposed that adjustment-related textiles issues should be established as a permanent item on the CTG agenda.

These measures are necessary, Tunisia argued, because developing and least developed countries have been hit hardest by changes in the textile and clothing sector. "Since 1 January 2005, these countries have seen their competitive advantages in their export markets wane, and have only retained the benefit of preferential, yet limited, tariff access," Tunisia declared. Although the document had been listed on the provisional agenda by Chair Vesa Himanen of Finland, China objected to discussing the Tunisian proposal and, with support from India, Brazil and Hong Kong, refused to accept the agenda as it stood (see BRIDGES Weekly, 1 December 2005, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/04-12-01/story1.htm>). As a result of the disagreement, Himanen suspended the CTG, saying he would hold consultations with Members "on an urgent basis."

EU launches formal consultations

On 17 May, EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson asked the European Commission to launch formal consultations with China in two of nine categories of textiles and clothing imports currently under EU examination. Under EU rules, the investigations launched on 24 April can take up to 60 days, but the procedure allows for urgent consultations in cases of import surges and threat of immediate damage to EU industry. Mandelson triggered this "urgency" provision for t-shirts and flax yarn. However, the other seven categories will continue to go through the full 60-day investigation process after which the EU will move to formal consultations with China if market disruption is found.

The Commission's investigation revealed that imports from China in the first months of this year have risen by 187 percent for T-shirts and 56 percent for flax yarn compared with the same period in 2004, resulting in drops in production in Greece, Portugal and Slovenia and also the displacement of exports from Morocco, Tunisia, Romania, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

The proposal to launch formal consultations with China for T-shirts and flax yarn will shortly be presented to the EU College of Commissioners, after which it will be discussed with EU members in the Textiles Committee. If the Committee reaches agreement, the Commission will send a letter requesting formal consultations with China. This process could be completed before the end of May. However, unlike in the US, quantitative restrictions are not imposed automatically when formal consultations are launched. Instead, the EU can impose quantitative restrictions using the textile specific safeguard clause if China does not introduce self-restrictions within 15 days of receiving the request for formal consultations (see BRIDGES Weekly, 27 April 2005, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/05-04-27/story2.htm>).

ICTSD Reporting; "Chinese textiles imports investigation: use of the urgency procedure," EU PRESS RELEASE, 17 May 2005; "China Rejects U.S. Decision to Impose Safeguard Quotas, Hints at WTO Action," WTO REPORTER, 17 May 2005; "CITA Announces That It Will Invoke Safeguards On Textile Imports From China," CITA PRESS RELEASE, 12 May 2005; "China expresses 'strong displeasure and firm opposition' to US re-imposing of textile quota," XINHUA, 16 May 2005; "China and Turkey at loggerheads over textiles row at WTO," AFX, 10 May 2005; "China Blocks WTO Discussions On Post-Quota Textile Aid Proposal," WTO REPORTER, 11 May 2005.

IN BRIEF

SUPACHAI CONFIRMED AS UNCTAD SECRETARY-GENERAL

On 11 May, the UN General Assembly confirmed the appointment of WTO Director-General Supachai Panitchpakdi of Thailand as Secretary-General of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The confirmation came after a delay of two and a half months. The G-77, a coalition of 132 developing nations, put the ratification process on hold following UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's nomination of Supachai. The group was concerned that the WTO Director-General did not represent their interests, and felt they had not been adequately consulted prior to the nomination. The 191-member General Assembly was eventually able to endorse Supachai's nomination by consensus, though it took several rounds of consultations to assuage the different concerns.

Having served as president of the tenth session of UNCTAD in 2000, the former Thai Deputy Prime Minister and banker is familiar with the organisation. In a statement following the confirmation, Supachai stressed his commitment to make trade a tool for development and called trade "an essential part of the mix" of policies needed to achieve sustainable economic growth. Succeeding Rubens Ricupero of Brazil, who led UNCTAD from 1995 to 2004, Supachai will start his four-year term on 1 September after his mandate at the WTO comes to an end.

"Supachai welcomes appointment to UNCTAD, pledges continuing support for WTO and Doha Round," WTO PRESS RELEASE, 12 May 2005; "Supachai next head of UNCTAD," THE BANGKOK POST, 13 May 2005; "Supachai Panitchpakdi Confirmed As New UNCTAD Head," UNCTAD PRESS RELEASE, 12 May 2005; "Thai economist to head UN trade agency," REUTERS 12 May 2005; "General assembly confirms Supachai Panitchpakdi of Thailand as UNCTAD secretary-general," UN PRESS RELEASE, 11 May 2005.

TRADE QUESTIONS KEY TO DEVELOPING COUNTRY BIOSAFETY POLICY, UNCTAD SAYS

Developing countries attempting to set up domestic biosafety and biotechnology regulations do not have the same policy-making freedom as their developed country counterparts, argues a report released 10 May by UNCTAD. Instead, they are often expected to set up their national regulatory schemes based on the

demands of their main trade partners. The report, entitled "International Trade in GMOs and GM Products: National and Multilateral Legal Frameworks," argues that developing countries are increasingly caught between the different regulatory approaches adopted by the US and EU because the US views genetically modified (GM) products as substantially equivalent to their conventional counterparts while the EU does not, instead subjecting them to a rigorous regulatory process. UNCTAD argues that developing countries should balance their role as producers, their commitment to environmental preservation, and the need to improve the quantity and quality of agricultural and food products domestically along with demands from their trading partners regarding biosafety regulations.

Furthermore, the report notes that the inability of negotiations in the WTO (mandated under para. 31(i) of the Doha Declaration) and elsewhere to clarify how to deal with sectors that are covered both by multilateral environmental agreements and by WTO disciplines is leading in practice to a shift in responsibility and policy-making power from the WTO negotiations to the WTO dispute settlement process. An analysis of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety under the Convention on Biological Diversity and the WTO shows that the two legal frameworks are not fully consistent with each other. Following a brief description of the WTO challenge by the US, Canada and Argentina against the EU's biotech regulations (see BRIDGES Trade BioRes, 10 September 2004, <http://www.ictsd.org/biores/04-09-10/story1.htm>), the potential WTO case for and against biotechnology regulations is examined. The report suggests that clauses in the Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade, and the GATT itself could be used to defend biotechnology regulations that adversely affect trade.

The report is available at <http://www.unctad.org/Templates/webflyer.asp?docid=5831&intltemID=2068&lang=1>

"Genetically modified crops pose dilemma for developing countries," AXCESS NEWS, 12 May 2005.

SUSTAINABLE ENERGY FORUM CONSIDERS BIOFUELS TRADE

Participants at the fifth Global Forum on Sustainable Energy (GFSE-5) discussed ways to enhance international cooperation on biomass, including through the expansion of international markets and trade. Meeting in Vienna from 11-13 May, GFSE-5 discussed the potential and challenges for increasing biomass use, the relationship between biomass needs for

energy use and as food crops, and considered regional experiences. Among other things, participants discussed the potential for increased trade in biofuels -- clean-burning, carbon-neutral fuels derived from agricultural crops and waste that can be used to partially replace liquid petroleum products. They noted, however, current trade barriers such as tariffs. While the most competitive producers of biofuels, principally ethanol and biodiesel, are located in the South, there is a large and growing demand in OECD countries seeking to implement climate targets and improve their energy mix. A new export market could channel money back to rural areas in developing countries by creating jobs and spurring diversification of the agriculture sector. At the meeting, participants considered potential conflicts between local development of biofuels programmes (through agricultural and rural development schemes) and imports, and ways to overcome such conflicts to allow the co-existence of both and expansion of the overall use of biofuels.

For more information on GFSE-5, visit <http://www.gfse.at/gfse5.htm>

For a full report of the meeting, see IISD's Earth Negotiations Bulletin at <http://www.iisd.ca/sd/gfse5/>

ICTSD reporting.

WTO IN BRIEF

NEW US APPROACH TO INJECT MOMENTUM INTO SERVICES TALKS?

On 17 May, US Deputy Trade Representative Peter Allgeier suggested that the "request-offer" approach within the WTO services negotiations has not led to significant results, and said a more proactive approach may be necessary to get other Members to reach the US standard for market opening in the services sector. Speaking at a hearing at the US House Ways and Means Trade Subcommittee, Allgeier said the US had floated some initial ideas informally with some other WTO Members, after the Chair of the services negotiations, Alejandro Jara, had called for informal ideas for how to get the discussions back on track. According to Allgeier, the request-offer approach could be supplemented with further market opening in "core critical areas," which would have to be identified.

US services industry representatives expressed their support for further services liberalisation. According to Norman Sorensen, Chair of the Coalition of Services

Industries, the services negotiations are in crisis because "too few offers have been tabled, and those offers that have been tabled provide for too little liberalisation," and would benefit from a fresh approach. In this regard, WTO Members should agree to initial market openings in all services sectors, and build on that.

"U.S. Wants New Approach to Spur Global Talks on Services Trade," BLOOMBERG, 17 May 2005; "U.S. Floats New Initiative to Supplement Existing Approach to WTO Services Talks," WTO REPORTER, 18 May 2005.

1-514-288-2220; fax: 1-514-288-6588; email: secretariat@biodiv.org.

25-27 May, Almaty, Kazakhstan SECOND MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE AARHUS CONVENTION ON ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS. This meeting is organised by the UN Economic Commission for Europe. It is expected to adopt a decision aimed at further developing the application of the Convention with respect to genetically modified organisms. For further information contact the Aarhus Convention Secretariat; tel: 41-22-917-4226; fax: 41-22-907-0107; e-mail: public.participation@unece.org

EVENTS & RESOURCES

VACANCY

The Ideas Centre is seeking a SENIOR POLICY ADVISOR with a solid background in international trade law, international economics and international relations, specific knowledge and practical experience in international trade negotiations and development institutions, as well as experience with trade and development policy analysis. The advisor would design and manage trade policy advice programs in developing and transition countries, many of which are related to WTO accession, and undertake trade and development related policy analysis. For further information, please go to <http://www.ideascentre.ch>. Interested applicants should send their curriculum vitae and a supporting cover letter to Ms. Natacha Bogorad, IDEAS Centre, email: natacha.bogorad@ideascentre.ch.

EVENTS

For a more comprehensive list of events in trade and sustainable development, please refer to ICTSD's web calendar at: <http://www.ictsd.org/cal/index.htm>. If you would like to submit an event, please email events@ictsd.ch.

Coming Up: 19-26 May

25-27 May, Montreal, Canada: FIRST MEETING OF THE AD HOC OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON LIABILITY AND REDRESS UNDER THE BIOSAFETY PROTOCOL. This meeting is organised by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Secretariat. For further information contact the CBD Secretariat, tel:

25 May - 4 June (Tentative), Paris, France: THIRD SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETING OF EXPERTS ON THE PRELIMINARY DRAFT CONVENTION ON THE PROTECTION OF THE DIVERSITY OF CULTURAL CONTENTS AND ARTISTIC EXPRESSIONS. This meeting is organised by UNESCO and will continue negotiations on the Convention mandated by a UNESCO General Council Decision in 2003. For further information contact Ms. Moe Chiba, tel: (+33 1) 4568-4316; fax: 4568-5597; email: m.chiba@unesco.org.

WTO Events

An updated list of forthcoming WTO meetings is posted at: http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/meets.pdf. Please bear in mind that dates and times of WTO meetings are often changed, and that the WTO does not always announce the important informal meetings of the different bodies. Unless otherwise indicated, all WTO meetings are held at the WTO, Centre William Rappard, rue de Lausanne 154, 1211 Geneva, Switzerland, and are open to WTO Members and accredited observers only.

19 May: TRADE NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE

19 May: DISPUTE SETTLEMENT BODY

24 May: WORKING PARTY ON THE ACCESSION OF BELARUS

25 May: COMMITTEE OF PARTICIPANTS ON THE EXPANSION OF TRADE IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PRODUCTS

25 May: COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT - DEDICATED SESSION

26 - 27 May: GENERAL COUNCIL

Other Upcoming Events

19-27 May, Bonn, Germany: 22ND SESSIONS OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODIES TO THE UNFCCC. Following an agreement at the tenth Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC in December 2004, SB-22 will be preceded by a "Seminar of Government Experts," which will seek to promote an informal exchange of information on actions concerning mitigation and adaptation, and on policies and measures adopted by governments supporting implementation of existing commitments under the UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol. The Seminar is scheduled for 16 and 17 May. For more information contact: UNFCCC Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-1000; fax: +49-228-815-1999; e-mail: secretariat@unfccc.int; Internet: http://unfccc.int/files/parties_and_observers/notification/application/pdf/notice_po_050216.pdf

28 November to 9 December, Montreal, Canada: FIRST MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE KYOTO PROTOCOL AND ELEVENTH CONFERENCE OF PARTIES TO THE UNFCCC. The first Meeting of Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (MOP-1) is taking place in conjunction with the eleventh session of the Conference of Parties (COP-11) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). For more information contact: UNFCCC Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-1000; fax: +49-228-815-1999; e-mail: secretariat@unfccc.int; Internet: http://unfccc.int/meetings/unfccc_calendar/items/2655.php

RESOURCES

FULFILLING THE PROMISE OF THE DOHA DEVELOPMENT ROUND. Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs. April 2005. The purpose of this discussion paper is to outline the priorities of the Netherlands with regard to realising the development dimension of the Doha Round: agreeing ambitious modalities for agriculture in all three pillars, including a specific result for cotton; agreeing ambitious, balanced market access for non-agricultural products, with sufficient flexibility for developing countries; free market access for all products from the LDCs to all the OECD member states and richer developing countries by 1 January 2010; agreeing the outlines of a development-friendly agreement on trade facilitation; and establishing a multilateral Aid for Trade Facility to finance adjustment costs in poorer developing. The paper recommends that these priorities are addressed at an early stage in the run-up to the sixth Ministerial Conference of the WTO in Hong Kong, as a successful outcome in Hong Kong in the form of an ambitious and balanced interim package will be vital for completing the Doha Round by the end of 2006 and for maintaining the

WTO's vitality as the relevant multilateral forum for trade negotiations. To access this paper visit http://www.minbuza.nl/default.asp?CMS_TCP=tcpAsset&id=1F12ACAC40A3471AA41AA53F167C193FX2X61850X41

AFRICAN ECONOMIC OUTLOOK 2004/2005 - WHAT'S NEW FOR AFRICA. OECD May 2005. African economies have just registered their highest overall growth in eight years - more than 5 percent in 2004 - thanks to rising global commodity prices, the expansion of its oil production, propitious weather conditions, and steadily prudent economic policies. This report deals with issues of how oil producers can take advantage of oil-revenue windfalls, the policy challenges related to the removal of preferential trade agreements as well as the ways in which trade partners and donors can help African governments further these changes. The book may be purchased from the OECD bookshop at <http://www.oecdbookshop.org/oecd/display.asp?lang=EN&sf1=identifiers&st1=412005011p1>

SWEET OR SOUR? THE US SUGAR PROGRAM AND THE THREATS POSED BY THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC-CENTRAL AMERICA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT. By R. Dennis Olson (Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy). April 2005. This report seeks to illustrate how increased sugar imports required by the proposed Dominican Republic-Central America Free Trade Agreement may threaten the viability of the US sugar program. According to the report, the end of the US sugar program would be devastating to sugar and sugar beet farmers in the US and would hurt sugar farmers in many developing countries. To access this report visit <http://www.tradeobservatory.org/library.cfm?refid=72784>

PREFERENTIAL TRADING ARRANGEMENTS IN AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD MARKETS: THE CASE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE UNITED STATES. By OECD. March 2005. The findings in this report suggest that the multilateral tariff reductions currently being negotiated under the World Trade Organisation's Doha Development Round pose little threat to farm exports from the world's developing nations and may even offer greater promise than the current system of preferential trading regimes devised to boost commerce with rich countries. The report provides information on the extent to which developing countries have utilised selected, non-reciprocal preferential trading schemes provided by the EU and the US. The report may be purchased from the OECD's online book store <http://www.oecdbookshop.org>

THE CONSEQUENCES OF AGRICULTURAL TRADE LIBERALIZATION FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN GENUINE BENEFITS AND FALSE HOPES. By Jean-Christophe Bureau, Sébastien Jean and Alan Matthews (Institute for International Integration Studies Discussion Paper). April 2005. This discussion paper analyses the impact of agricultural trade liberalisation on developing countries and looks at the scope for special and differential treatment in future multilateral trade negotiations in the area of agriculture. To access this report please visit <http://www.tcd.ie/iis/Discussion%20Paper%20series%20html/IIISDP73.htm>

TRADE PREFERENCE EROSION: POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACTS: OECD Trade Policy Working Paper No 17. By Douglas Lippoldt and Przemyslaw Kowalski, April 2005. This paper presents the new findings from the on-going work of the OECD project on trade preference erosion. Following a review of the recent literature, the paper develops two main types of analysis. First, a detailed statistical analysis is undertaken drawing on the trade preferences database developed by the Secretariat and covering the Quad countries and Australia. The second analytical approach uses the standard model and database of the Global Trade Analysis Project to simulate trade liberalisation scenarios that would entail preference erosion. While highlighting a number of cases of preference reliance, the paper underscores the advantages of multilateral liberalisation. To access this report visit: [http://www.ois.oecd.org/olis/2004doc.nsf/43bb6130e5e86e5fc12569fa005d004c/cf1e755a9a6405a7c1256fef0034e731/\\$FILE/JT00183004.PDF](http://www.ois.oecd.org/olis/2004doc.nsf/43bb6130e5e86e5fc12569fa005d004c/cf1e755a9a6405a7c1256fef0034e731/$FILE/JT00183004.PDF)

DO AS I SAY, NOT AS I DO THE UNFAIR TERMS FOR VIET NAM'S ENTRY TO THE WTO. Oxfam Briefing Note. May 2005. In 2005, Viet Nam hopes to achieve full WTO membership. A bad accession agreement could make future economic growth less beneficial for poorer sectors, and could involve economic restructuring that leads to a major loss of livelihoods. This briefing note assesses the impacts of the WTO-plus accession package on the country's economic development. To access this briefing note visit http://www.oxfam.org.uk/what_we_do/issues/trade/downloads/bn_vietnam.pdf

RISK ON LOCAL FISH POPULATIONS AND ECOSYSTEMS POSED BY THE USE OF IMPORTED FEED FISH BY THE TUNA FARMING INDUSTRY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN. By the WWF Mediterranean Programme. April 2005. More than 225 000 tonnes of feed-fish are used annually by tuna farms in the Mediterranean. This report highlights the possible

dangers of introducing new exotic viruses through imported feed-fish, which might affect wild stocks and the whole Mediterranean ecosystem.

To access this report visit: <http://www.panda.org/downloads/europe/wwfonenvironmentalriskoftunafarming.doc>

Back issues of **BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest**© can be accessed at: <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/archive.htm>

BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest© is published by the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD), <http://www.ictsd.org/>. Electronic distribution is carried out by the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP).

Contributors to this issue of **BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest**© are Trineesh Biswas, Dominic Furlong, Hilde Ludt, Sarah Mohan and Malena Sell. Editors: Malena Sell, msell@ictsd.ch, and Trineesh Biswas. Director: Ricardo Meléndez-Ortiz, rmelendez@ictsd.ch. ICTSD is an independent, not-for-profit organisation based at: 7, ch. de Balexert, 1219 Geneva, Switzerland, tel: (41-22) 917-8492; fax: 917-8093. Excerpts from **BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest**© may be used in other publications with appropriate citation. Comments and suggestions are welcomed and should be directed to the Editor or the Director.

BRIDGES Weekly Trade News Digest is made possible in 2001 - 2004 through the generous support of the Government of the United Kingdom (DFID). Additional support is provided by ICTSD's core donors: the Governments of Finland, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden; Christian Aid (UK), MISEREOR, NOVIB (NL), Oxfam (UK) and the Swiss Coalition of Development Organisations (Switzerland). The **Weekly** also benefits from support for the **BRIDGES** series of publications including: the Rockefeller Foundation, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and Swiss Development Cooperation. ISSN 1563-0

